

JOHN 13:4 HE TOOK A TOWEL:

INTRO:

- The opening of John 12 we see feet being anointed.
- Then we see multitudes follow after Jesus, vs. 12.
- Then near the end of this chapter we see a remarkable thing, Jesus hides Himself from the crowds. From the masses.
- The Jews who in verses 13-19 of the same chapter came to worship Him, and make Him King.
- And amazingly in 12:36, we are told that Jesus separated and hid Himself from the crowds and in these next 5 chapters, 13-17, we see Jesus opening Himself to these dear beloved disciples of His in private.
- Having separated Himself from the masses and gives and opens Himself to His blessed disciples, strengthening, loving, caring and teaching them.
- Now, Jn. 13: 1, begins a new section in this gospel, the section runs from chapter 13 to the end of chapter 17.
- Here we see Christ having separated Himself, alone with His disciples, encouraging them, strengthening them, and telling them of their special privilege and portion in the love and purposes of God.
- In these chapters Jesus intensifies His declaration to them regarding His special love and the place they held in that love, and how that love was and would be continually exercised on their behalf.
- Up unto this point Christ had ministered to the Nation, but His public ministry was now ended.
- It would have been natural for the disciples to assume that His ministry to them had also ended. This Christ declares to them is not the case regarding them.
- Here we are shown that Jesus loved His disciples not only unto the cross, but unto the end.
- His return to the Father would not terminate nor diminish the activities of his love for His own, but in heaven He is still occupied with the interests of His people.
- Now in vs. 1-12 we see Jesus washing the feet of all 12 disciples.
- The feet of Christ were anointed while the feet of the disciples were washed,
- His feet needed not to be cleansed for He ever walked in perfection, purity and holiness pleasing the Father.
- As our Savior walked through this sinful world, He picked up no defilement. (JN. 14:30 the Price of this World has nothing in me.)
- Jesus walked through this sin sick world and did not pick up any defilement or any hint of its sinful grime.
- He was always holy, harmless and undefiled. (Heb. 7:26)

- The aroma of the sweat spikenard is a beautiful expression of the fragrance of the Life of Christ, pleasing the Father, as sweat smelling fragrance unto God. Eph. 5:2

READ JN. 13:1-17

VS. 1-4

- Notice in these verses the love of Jesus and the hatred of man, the Savior, the satan.
- We must not miss Jesus's awareness of His divine origin and His destiny.
- This whole scene of the Masters love, care and service to His beloved disciples is a snap shot of His whole demeanor of life and attitude.
- Jesus rises from supper: He rises in His humility. Even in His humility to serve He rises. In lowering Himself, He rises. The greatest is he who serves.
- Here He physically displays His servant heart by taking the prerogative that was His, to strip Himself of His outward glory and display Himself as the Servant of God and man.

HIS OWN:

- Those the Father had given to Him. Jn. 17:2, 6, 9, 11, 12, 24. Jn. 6:37
- After all the previous conflicts with an unbelieving world, after all His unavailing appeals to Israel,
- Christ now comforts his heart by pouring His love upon the few who were His own, whom the Father had given to Him, those who did not despise Him.

LOVED:

- Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end, loved them to the uttermost, He loved them unto their completion.
- All the love they needed and beyond. They lacked nothing in love from Jesus.
- He loved them unto the end.
- The end of His passion, to the end of His mission, to the end of their earthly passage, to the end of their need.
 - Lo I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Mt. 28:20

HE TOOK A TOWEL. 12 LETTERS, 4 WORDS.

HE:

- Who is the HE?
- **READ PG. 13.** In His Presence.
- He is God blessed for evermore. Rom. 9:5, Titus 2:13
- He Who will one day soon bolt out of heaven on a white steed and burst into our vision bringing judgement and reward. 1 Thess 4:16-17, Rev. 19.

FOR WHOM:

- A dozen obscure, ignorant, self-seeking ambitious fisherman and such, and one of whom was a traitor.
- All of whom are slow to learn, dull of hearing, dull enough to fall asleep when He needed them most.
- All of whom would desert Him in His hour of deepest darkest need.
- People with pasts just like me and you.
- Sinners, enemies of God, children of wrath like all others, lovers of self and haters of God.
- Knowing their past failures, their soon coming failures, their future failures, He commits His love to them, to us, to His church without reservation, without retreat, without reserve.

TOOK:

- His servant heart was not forced upon Him, He was not pressured into taking this position, He freely took it and took it voluntarily.
- He was the instigator, the Author of becoming a Servant, He pursued the towel and the role of a servant, He was the Initiator.
- This acceptance and continual display of servant hood, a servant hood that would lead Him to a cross to die innocently for the guilty was not forced upon Him,
- He TOOK, the towel.
- This display of holy humility and service exemplifies the whole life of the incarnated holy child of Bethlehem.
- This display was not something new in His character, what He did was what was always in His heart.
 - Mt. 11:29, PS. 113:5-6, Isa. 57:15, **I have come to do Thy will!**
- It enfolds and envelops the great character of our Servant King,
- He who came through the door of humility and emptying, and stripping Himself of all His rights and prerogatives, His inherent glory and power to give His life a ransom for many. Phil. 2:5-8

TOWEL:

- A linen cloth, or large towel commonly used by girding it around ones waist.
- The taking up and girding on a towel was the work of the lowly servant of the house hold, it was the badge of slavery.
 - 1 Peter 5:5, ⁵You younger men, likewise, be subject to *your* elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.

CONCLUSION: WHAT IS MY TAKE AWAY, WHAT DO I DO WITH THIS?

- **First; may I get a glimpse of the great heart of Jesus, may I appreciate, contemplate on His love, His love for His people, His Church.**
- **Second may I then strive by the Spirit's power to live humbly, thinking little of myself and much of others, dying to self, letting Jesus increase for I must decrease, thus being conformed to His image.**
- **To bow before God and humble myself.**
- **And, oh how we must watch our attitude, we must check and know our attitude. Why do I serve? what is my motive.**
 - **1 Cor. 13:1-3.**
- **To let the Spirit of Christ so fill me with the humility of Jesus and to serve Him by serving others and seek no praise from man.**

- **O to be like Thee! lowly in spirit,
Holy and harmless, patient and brave;
Meekly enduring cruel reproaches,
Willing to suffer, others to save.**

- **O to be like Thee! While I am pleading
Pour out Thy Spirit, fill with Thy love.
Make me a temple meet for Thy dwelling,
Fit for a life and heaven above.**